Unauthorised entry into Defence establishments in Kashmir

3940. SHRI S. S. AHLUWALIA : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that several incidents involving unauthorised entry into the most secured Defence establishments in the Kashmir Valley have been taking place during the recent past ;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is also a fact that the Defence authorities deviated from the norms relating to secrecy, etc. during the visit of Maj. General E. W. Fernandes, designated Chief of Military Intelligence, to the Badami Bagh Cantt. on the 29th and 30th March, 1994 and even the dumping and inspection of the seized weapons/ammunitions was conducted during his visit in non-conventional and casual manner ; and

(d) if so, the steps taken by Government, if any, to prevent such incidents from occurring in future?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI MALLIKARJUN) : (a) Except for an incident of attack by anti-national elements on Outer Marker Post of Air Force Station Srinagar at Zadoora (Dist Pulwama—Kashmir) on 9th January, 1994, no other case of unauthorised entry into Defence establishments in the Kashmir valley has been reported.

(b) On 9th January, 1994, the militants overpowered a Defence Security Corps post at the outer marker (Instrument Landing System) of Air Force Station, Srinagar located at Village Zadoora (Pulwama District), 6.7 Kms. South-East of Srinagar airfield. In the attack 9 DSC personnel were killed and one MES employee was injured.

(c) and (d) The FOD is protected by a three tier security arrangement being provided by the BSF, the Defence Security Corps and the Army. The security instructions are being scrupulously adhered to. However, a Departmental Court of Inquiry has been ordered to look into all aspects of the incident.

IAF Pilot sucked out of aircraft

3941. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that an IAF senior pilot was recently sucked out of A-32 Russian-built aircraft while on air maintenance sorte in Ladakh sector;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof ;

(c) whether any inquiry has been conducted into the incident; and

(d) if so, what is the outcome thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI MALLIKARJUN) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. On 7-3-94, an AN-32 aircraft was authorised to fly an Air Maintenance sortie in the Ladakh area. While flying at a height of 27,000 feet, it experienced explosive decompression resulting in a loud bang and the cockpit misting up. When the cockpit had cleared the other crew members noticed that the Navigator's observation Bubble had burst. The Navigator, Wg. Cdr. RD Awasthi, was missing, apparently having been sucked out due to the sudden decompression. The aircraft immediately aborted the mission and carried out a safe landing at Leh without any further damage. Extensive aerial search by helicopters were made but the missing navigator Wg. Cdr. Awasthi could not be located.

(c) and (d) Yes Sir, a Court of Inquiry is investigating the incident.

Overcoming the shortage of officers in Defence forces

3942. SHRI SURESH KALMADI : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that Government are considering various options including enhanced intake, steps to make career in Defence Forces more attractive and better management to meet the critical shortage of officers in the middle ranks in all the three wings of Defence Forces namely the Army, the Navy and the Air Force; and

(b) if so, what are the details of the options?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI MALLIKARJUN) : (a) and (b) There are some shortages in the certain ranks in the Defence Services. The pay and remuneration packages available to Armed Forces officers are amongst the best available to Government employees. To make up the deficiencies measures such as introduction of University Entry Schemes, enhanced recruitment of permanent commissioned officers and Short Service Commissioned officers, induction of women as officers in the Armed Forces etc. have been taken.

The Government have since appointed the Fifth Central Pay Commission. One of the terms of reference of the Commission is to examine the present structure of emoluments and conditions of service of the personnel belongings to the Armed Forces, taking into account the total packet of benefits available to them and suggest changes therein which may be desirable and feasible.